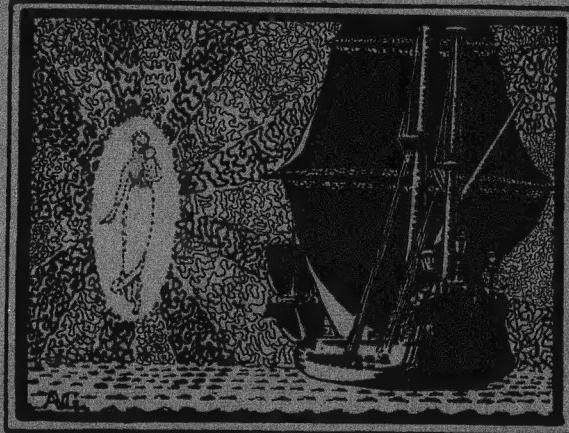


The
Ballad
of the
Royal
Ann'

By
Crosbie
Garstin

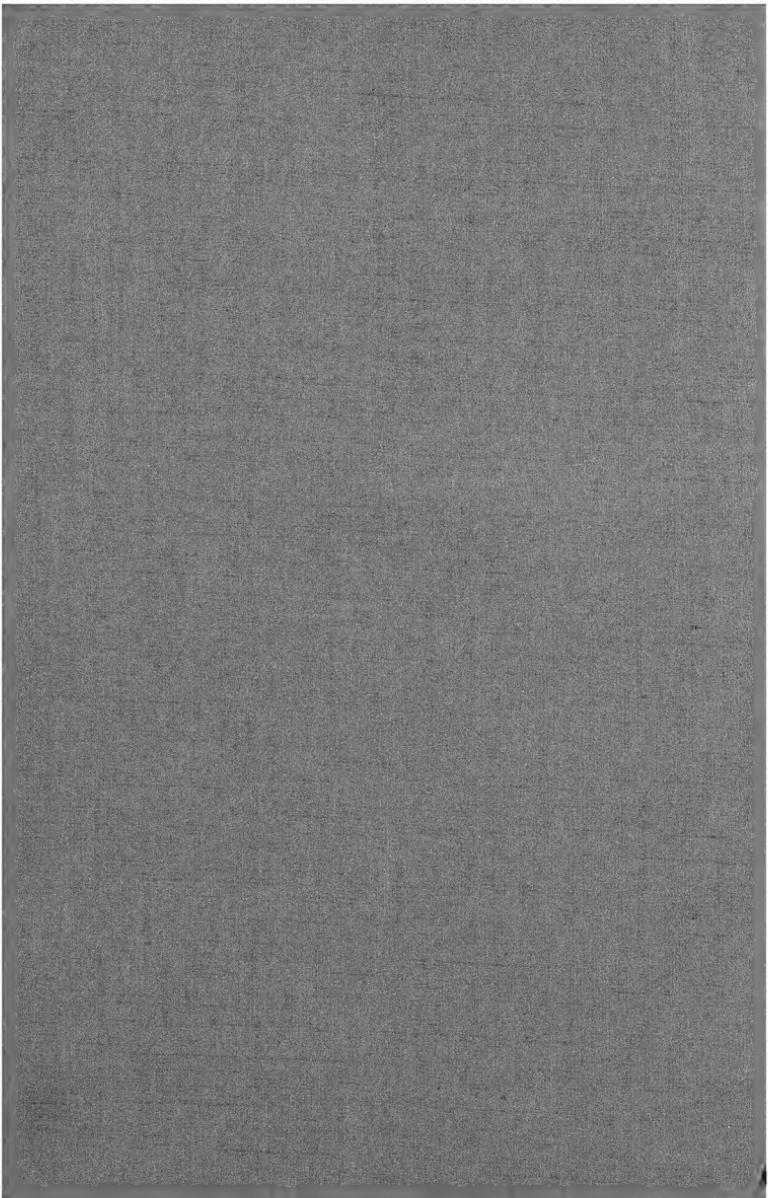
The Ballad of the “Royal Ann”



Crosbie Garstin

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The Ballad of the "Royal Ann"

*THE BALLAD OF THE
"ROYAL ANN."*

By Crosbie Garetin.

BYWAYS ROUND HELICON
By I. A. Williams.

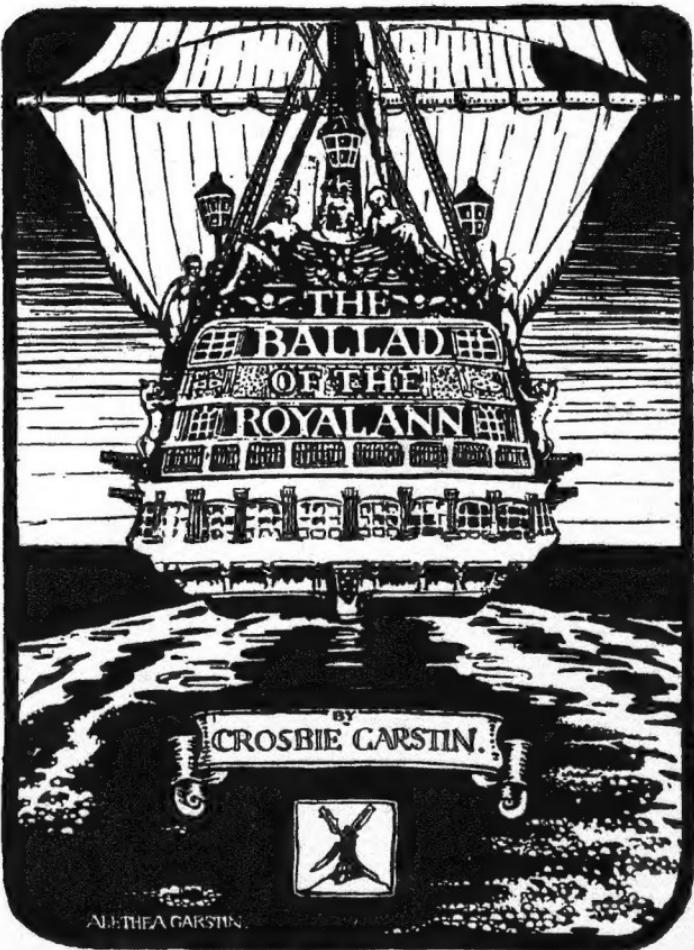
*DOWN HERE THE HAW-
THORN.*

By Thomas Moult.

REYNARD THE FOX.
By John Masefield.

RIGHT ROYAL.
By John Masefield.

*LONDON:
WILLIAM HEINEMANN*



LONDON: WILLIAM HEINEMANN
1922

To
FRYN AND STELLA TENNYSON JESSE

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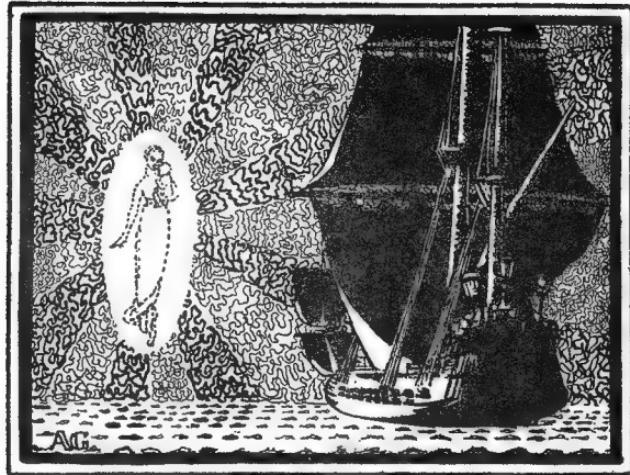
ACKNOWLEDGMENT

EIGHTEEN of these verses have appeared in *Punch*,
others in *The Spectator* and the *Windsor Magazine*.
I am indebted to the Proprietors and Editors, and
also to Mr. Fisher Unwin, for kindly giving me
permission to reprint.

CONTENTS.

	PAGE
THE BALLAD OF THE " ROYAL ANN "	1
THE MOOR STREAM	18
THE FAIR	20
A CORNISH LULLABY	23
A CORNISH COTTAGE	25
THE REEFS	27
MAIDEN'S BOWER ROCKS	32
OLD WOMAN'S HOUSE ROCK ...	35
HARD LEWIS ROCK	38
GEORGE PETERS ROCK ...	41
SPANISH LEDGES	44
THE SEA-LIGHTS	47
A BALLAD OF ROADS ...	49
PRAIRIE SONG	52
THE HOMESTEADER	54
THE COW-PONY	56
THE TRANSPORT RIDER ...	60
THE OWLD LAD	61
TRIOLET SERENADE	62
TRIOLET	63
SUNWARD	64

	PAGE
DOWN CHANNEL	66
MAGIC	67
CALLAO	68
AT ANCHOR	70
ALCHEMY	71
PORTS	74
NEW DRAFT	76
TO A REGIMENT OF HORSE	78
CHEMIN DES DAMES	80
OLD SOLDIERS	82
THE HAIRIES	85
A BALLAD OF BATTLES	89



The Ballad of the “Royal Ann”

I.

JOHN BASSETT stood in Bideford,
A drummer stood beside,
“Oh, who will man my ship of marque
That swims the Severn tide ?
And see strange brutes and birds and fruits
And win an Indian bride ?”

The Ballad of the “Royal Ann”

2.

“Oh, who will man the ‘Royal Ann’
Of full four hundred tons,
Furnished with pikes and musketoons,
And eight and forty guns ?
Oh high she is and dry she is,
And like a hind she runs.”

3.

John Bassett beat the Bristol quays
With hautboys and with drums,
The seamen left their tavern loves
And followed through the slums.
“Who comes to sack a tall carrack,”
John Bassett cried, “Who comes ?”

4.

“Who comes to sack the treasure ships
That bear the wealth of Spain ?
Who comes to take the golden ports
That front the Spanish Main,
And spoil their gear, and have good cheer
When he rolls home again ?”

The Ballad of the "Royal Ann"

5.

The seamen came from Bideford,
They came from Bristol quays,
They set their rummers down, and shook
The wenches from their knees.
"Oh, we will hew a path with you
Into the golden seas."

6.

From King's Road hard by Avonmouth
Set forth the "Royal Ann,"
Madeira's isle went down astern,
And the steady Trades began
To swell her pale half-moons of sail,
And like a hind she ran.

7.

And proud she stepped and swift she swept,
Her bow wave creamed and purred.
She passed the peak of Teneriffe,
The Islands of Cape Verde.
Into the blue south-west she flew
Winged like a snow-white bird.

The Ballad of the “Royal Ann”

8.

They had not come but seven days
Into the Carrib Sea
When the watch made hail, “I spy a sail
Close-hauled upon our lee.
Her quarters glow with gilt and oh
A galleon is she ! ”

9.

“Brail up the mizzen!” Bassett cried,
“Veer ship and give her chase.
Shake the top gallants out, my hearts,
To come with her apace.
Ho! Bo’sun, set the splinter net
And each man in his place.”

10.

“Ho Gunner, see the linstocks served,
The round-top fowlers manned.
Pile high each rack with ball, and stack
The rammers at your hand.
By Christ the Lord I’ll lay aboard
Or come no more to land ! ”

The Ballad of the “Royal Ann”

11.

They had not chased but glasses three
When they heard her trumpets shout.
The flag of Spain broke at the main
As she luffed and went about.
She hung and filled, her whistles shrilled
And a broadside thundered out.

12.

John Bassett laughed, “ So ho, so ho,
The gilded bel dame stings !
Shiver her masts with langrel blasts
And tear her cloth to strings.
She will not dance so gay perchance
When I have nipped her wings.”

13.

He brought her foremast by the board,
And loudly cheered the crew.
He ran athwart her hawse, and raked
Her foc’sle through and through.
Then hauled away his leaks to stay,
And came at her anew.

The Ballad of the “Royal Ann”

14.

The gunners sponged their pieces out
And hammered at their marks.
The round shot bit, the splinters lit
And whirled in flaming arcs.
And as men died, straight overside
They hove them to the sharks.

15.

John Bassett to the pilot turned,
“ Lay me aboard,” said he,
“ Grapple her rail, and lash her fast.
Ann Royals follow me.
Blow trumpets, blow, and up we go
Pride of the West Countree !”

16.

They poured aboard her at the waist
And sore the Spaniards pressed,
The captain stood upon the poop,
In silver armour dressed.
John Bassett’s sword bore down his guard
And bit into his breast.

The Ballad of the “Royal Ann”

17.

Great plunder had they from that prize,
Raw gold in massy bars,
Sugar, and spice, and indigo,
And wine, a hundred jars.
They picked her bare and left her there,
Red-blazing to the stars.

18.

Into a still lagoon they came
At boat-tow through the calms,
And there they set their wounded out
On a little isle of palms.
To lie at ease beneath the trees,
And mend them of their harms.

19.

And there they did the ship careen,
And scoured her fouling keel,
And tallowed well her strakes and wales
“To grease,” they said, “her heel.”
Patched there and here, and rove new gear,
And whet their boarding steel.

The Ballad of the “Royal Ann”

20.

From dawn to dark they plugged and caulked
The battered picaroon,
But when the purple tropic night
Swept down that still lagoon,
They went ashore to drink and whore,
And dance, beneath the moon.

21.

The moon was new, the moon she grew
And twice did ripe and wane
Before the “Royal Ann” was trim
And the sick eased of their pain.
Then they filled the butts, and burnt the
huts,
And towed to sea again.

22.

For twenty months the “Royal Ann”
Unceasing plied her trade.
Two lean black galleys sailed beside
To scout and lend her aid.
They swept the Main, a hurricane
Of shot and flame and blade.

The Ballad of the “Royal Ann”

23.

John Bassett smelt the Devon spring
The warm red Devon loam.
John Bassett dreamed of his true love
Amid the orchards' foam.
“One plunder more, but one,” he swore
“And I'll go get me home.”

.

24.

San Marco is a pleasant place
With bells upon its towers,
With caballeros in its streets
And doñas in its bowers,
Who take the air upon the Square
In the sweet evening hours.

25.

San Marco is a haughty place
With ship-ways all a-hum,
With companies of musketeers
That march to tap o' drum;
And there in packs on llama backs
The Aztec treasures come.

The Ballad of the "Royal Ann"

26.

San Marco is a holy place
It hath a bishop's care ;
A triple-domed cathedral broods
Upon the teeming Square ;
A Virgin stands with outstretched hands
Above the altar there.

27.

John Bassett to San Marco came
While all San Marco slept,
In from the sea, with muffled oars,
His stealthy long-boats crept,
Each following each, till on the beach
The grating kelsons leapt.

28.

John Bassett stabbed the drowsy guards
And swung their cannon round ;
He caught the soldiers in their beds
And made their sleep more sound.
The bishop crawled, and wept and bawled
And him they kicked and bound.

The Ballad of the “Royal Ann”

29.

The seamen sacked the magazines
Of all their goodly store ;
They prised the flags for money bags
Beneath the bishop's floor.
They left the rich without a stitch,
Then tortured them for more.

30.

And up and down the shrieking town
Went Bassett's privateers
They dragged the women out, and tore
The earrings from their ears.
And, mad for gold, stripped young and old,
E'en dead men on their biers.

31.

Into the dark cathedral burst
The crazed marauder bands,
They saw the Virgin stand above,
And the jewels on her hands.
Oh bright they flashed ! all fire-besplashed
From the tarred and flaming brands.

The Ballad of the “Royal Ann”

32.

They leapt aloft like raving dogs,
And brought her crashing down.
They ripped the gleaming brooches off
Her stiff embroidered gown ;
Her great pearl strings, and finger rings,
Her gem encrusted crown.

33.

Three days they held San Marco town
With culverin and sword,
While the “Royal Ann” lay off the bar,
And took the spoils aboard,
And each man drank until he sank
Awash before the Lord.

34.

Three days they bode, but on the fourth
They took the morning tide.
The “Royal Ann” stood out to sea
The galleys close beside.
Their trumpets blew, their pennons flew
Dawn-flushed and crimson dyed.

The Ballad of the “Royal Ann”

35.

They doused their top-sails to St. Mark's
And fired a parting gun.
The yonkers on the yard-arms cheered
To see the Spaniards run.
The mainsails swelled. Due East they held
Toward the rising sun.

36.

Right gallantly they put to sea,
And then the wind did pass,
The high sun beat upon the fleet
From a dome of burnished brass.
Their bells tolled as they dipped and rolled
On a sea of molten glass.

37.

The sun went down behind the coast,
Night draped them with her pall.
There in the dark, each drunken bark
Rolled till her masts would fall
Snapping the shrouds. Dawn came with
clouds,
But came no wind at all.

The Ballad of the “Royal Ann”

38.

The yards they creaked, the rats they
squeaked
Among the straining beams ;
The tackles jerked, the timbers worked
The caulkings from their seams,
The men lay stretched, and groaned, and
retched,
Or raved in dreadful dreams.

39.

The red sun came belted in flame,
Oh blinding bright he shone !
The swell writhed like a stricken beast,
A slimy swell and wan,
But no wind stirred, night came, the third,
And still the roll went on.

40.

On the third night, a dazzling light
Flared out full suddenly,
It swept towards the tumbling ships,
Pausing between the three,
And the pale Virgin of St. Mark's
Rose dripping from the sea.

The Ballad of the "Royal Ann"

41.

Between those black and bloody hawks,
She, like a silver dove,
Hung in a blaze of golden rays
That drenched her from above,
And in her face did Bassett trace
The sad eyes of his love.

42.

The blocks they clapped, the halyards
slapped,
The ships they dipped and rolled,
But never a seaman made a sound,
They were no longer bold,
Their brows were wet with a trickling sweat
Of terror, deathly cold.

43.

In a poor shift the Virgin stood,
Salt drops ran from its hem,
Her head was bare to the night air,
Bare of its diadem.
And as they gazed in awe, she raised
Her dripping hands to them.

The Ballad of the "Royal Ann"

44.

Then loud the ancient pilot cried,
"She pleadeth for her own.
Give back, give back the gems ye stole,
Make haste ye to atone,
Else here we stay till Judgment day,
Rotted to blackened bone."

45.

They took the gem-encrusted crown
And placed it in a boat,
Her finger-rings, the great pearl strings
Torn from her lily throat.
Into the stark, engulfing dark
They watched the pinnace float.

46.

And suddenly the beam was gone,
Gone was the vision too,
But the stars came out across the sky
Like a drift of silver dew,
A sweet wind stirred, the bow-wave purred,
As the great sails filled and drew.

The Ballad of the “Royal Ann”

47.

The seamen on John Bassett cried,
“Captain, a breeze, a breeze !
Let us begone upon our course,
Out of these curséd seas !”
But the captain stayed—as though he
prayed—
Stone-dead upon his knees.

The Moor Stream

(LAMORNA.)

WIND-BORNE his summons came for her
 Where on the moors she lay.
Dawn set the world aflame for her
 And swept the stars away.

She heard the Sea's voice swell again,
 "Oh come my own, my sweet!"
She trembled with its spell again
 And sped her crystal feet.

And now by reedy valley-ways
 She hastens to his calls,
By willow-latticed alley-ways
 And creaming waterfalls.

The choirs of linnets trill to her,
 "Oh little bride, good-bye!"
The blackbird bugles shrill to her
 From out the April sky.

The Moor Stream

Sun-sparkling, and a-quiver she
Comes dancing from above,
With silver bells a-shiver, she
Runs laughing to her love.

And long he sings and strong he sings,
His thundrous music fills
The valley, and the song he sings
Rolls up the golden hills.

The Fair

Look up ! my child ; the sirens whoop
Shrill invitations to the Fair,
The gaudy swing-boats soar and swoop,
The Gavioli organs blare ;
Bull-throated showmen, bracken-brown,
Compete to shout each other down.

Behold the booths of gingerbread !
Of nougat and of peppermints,
The stall of toys, where overhead
Balloons of gay translucent tints
Float on the breeze, and drift and sway ;
Fruit of a fairy vine are they.

Within this green, fantastic grot
Bright coloured balls are danced and spun
On jets ("'Ere Lovey, 'ave a shot'"),
A gipsy lady tends a gun,
A very rose of gipsy girls,
With earrings glinting in her curls.

The Fair

Will marvels cease ? This humble booth
Enshrines a dame of royal birth,
Princess Badroulboudour, forsooth,
The fattest princess on the earth.
Come, we will stand where kings have stood,
And you shall pinch her—if you're good.

The brasses gleam, the mirrors flash,
How splendid is the Round-About !
The organ brays, the cymbals clash,
The spotted horses bound about
Their whirling platform, full of beans,
And country girls ride by like queens.

Professor Battling Bendigo
(Ex ten-stone champion of the West)
Parades the stage before his show,
And swells his biceps and his chest ;
“ Is England’s man’ood dead and gone ? ”
He asks, “ Won’t no one take me on ? ”

A big drum booms, revolvers crack ;
Who is this hero that appears,

The Fair

A scarlet tunic on his back,
His whiskers curling round his ears ?
'Tis he who drew the jungle's sting,
Diabolo, the Lion King.

Within are birds beyond belief,
And creatures colourful and quaint ;
Lean dingoes weighed with secret grief,
And monkey humorists who ain't,
Bears, camels, pards. . . . Look up, my dear
The wonders of the world are here !

A Cornish Lullaby

A.D. 1760.

SLEEP, my little ugling,
Daddy's gone a-smuggling,
Daddy's gone to Roscoff in the "Mevagissey
Maid,"
A sloop of ninety tons
With ten brass carriage-guns,
To teach the King's ships manners and
respect for honest trade.

Hush, my joy and sorrow,
Daddy'll come to-morrow,
Bringing baccy, tea and snuff and brandy
home from France ;
And he'll run the goods ashore
While the old Collectors snore,
And the black dragoons gamble in the
dens of Penzance.

Rock-a-by, my honey,
Daddy's making money,

A Cornish Lullaby

You shall be a gentleman and sail with
privateers,
With a silver cup for sack,
A blue coat on your back,
With diamonds on your finger-bones and
gold rings in your ears.

A Cornish Cottage

BESIDE the clock two spaniels stand,
Two china spaniels, golden spotted.
On a lace doily (contraband)
Beams a red-faced geranium (potted).

Framed portraits rest on woollen mats,
Black-bearded smugglers with their spouses,
The gentlemen wear bowler hats,
The ladies sport their Sunday blouses.

Two pictures decorate the wall,
Vesuvius, spouting sparks and ashes,
The brig "Calypso" in a squall,
Full-sailed despite the lightning flashes.

Without, the dark Atlantic flings
Against the cliff its booming surges,
And, as a shell, this snug room rings
With its reverberating dirges.

A Cornish Cottage

Shaking the door the night winds whine,
Like outcast mongrels shrill and shifting.
Seaward, the tossing ship-lights shine,
Ruby and green, like fire-flies drifting.

The Reefs.

(ISLES OF SCILLY.)

WHO sank the "Primo" ?

"I," said the Seven Stones,

"And then ate her bones.

She crashed bows on with her sails in tatters,

I broke her up as a mallet shatters

An egg. She didn't take long to vanish.

I heard her people praying in Spanish.

In the boiling lather of surf that draped me,

And only a single dago escaped me,

I sank the 'Primo.' "

Who sank the "Sussex" ?

"I," said the Seal,

"I ripped up her keel.

She came from Baltimore carrying cattle,

And oh but I laughed to see 'em battle

For shore, the blockheads, mooing and
blowing,

The Reefs

With whirlpools sucking and currents
towing
Them back. They sank where the grey
rock cod is ;
The sea was thick with their drifting bodies.
I sank the 'Sussex.'"

Who sank the "Association" ?
" I," said the Gilstone,
" She sank like a millstone.
A ship o' the line, a huge first-rater ;
I sank the 'Eagle' and 'Romney' later.
The cabin-boy, who was born in a hovel,
Lord High Admiral Cloutesley Shovel,
Him I drowned, and his captains round him,
A woman buried him where she found him,
Out on the sands with the sea-birds wailing—
A Lord High Admiral home from sailing.
I sank the 'Association.' "

Who sank the "Schiller" ?
" I," said Retarrier,
" She challenged my barrier.
As big as a church and as tall as a steeple,

The Reefs

Crammed with specie and mails and people,
Into my jaws the night-fogs drove her,
She struck, and crumpled, and then heeled
over.

Her boats were swamped as she rolled and
crushed them,
The women shrieked till the black seas
hushed them.

I drowned three hundred as easy as winking,
Which wasn't a bad night's work I'm
thinking.

I sank the 'Schiller.'"

Then the grim rocks that stand guard about
Scilly—

Buccaboo, Great Smith and Little Granilly,
The Barrel of Butter, Dropnose and Hell-
weather—

Started to boast of their conquests together,
Of drowned men and gallant tall vessels
laid low,

While gulls wheeled about them like flurries
of snow,

The Reefs

And green combers romped at them smashing
 in thunder,
Gurgling and booming in caverns down
 under,
Sending their diamond drops flying in
 showers.
“Oh !” said the reefs, “What a business is
 ours !
Since saints in coracles paddled from Erin
(Fishing our waters for sinners and herrin’),
And purple-sailed triremes of Hamilco came
To the Islands of Tin, we’ve played at the
 game.
We shattered the galleys of conquering
 Rome,
The galleons of Phillip, that scudded for
 home
(The sea-molluscs slime on their glittering
 gear),
We plundered the plundering French
 privateer.
We caught the great Indiaman head in the
 wind,

The Reefs

And gutted her hold of the treasures of Ind ;
We broke the proud ships of His Majesty's
fleet
(The bones of their seamen lie bleached at
our feet),
And cloudy tea-clippers that raced from
Canton,
Swept into our clutches—and never went on.
Came steel leviathans mocking disaster,
We scrapped them as fast—if anything
faster.
So pick up your pilot and take a cross-
bearing,
Sound us and chart us from Lion to Tearing,
And ring us with lighthouses, day-marks
and buoys,
The gales are our hunters, the fogs our
decoys.
We shall not go hungry ; we grin, and we
wait,
Black-fanged and foam-drabbled, the wolves
at the gate.

Maiden's Bower Rocks

(ISLES OF SCILLY.)

IT was an earl's daughter, she lived in a
bower.
Ding-dong, ding-a-dong-dey.
And she was as fair as a daffodil flower
That nods in the girdle of May.
The floor of her bower was strewn with
green rushes,
Full many knights' banners hung waving
above,
And round her young minstrels stood sing-
ing like thrushes
Brave ballads of lovers and love,
Dove-
Wooings and cooings of love.
But over their harping and over their
singing,
When twilight came mantled in lilac and
grey,

Maiden's Bower Rocks

Would sound the sweet clangour of chapel
 bells ringing
“Ding-dong, ding-a-dong-dey,”
 From over the hills and away.

It was an earl's daughter, she lived in a
 bower.
 Ding-dong, ding-a-dong-dey.
But the salt sea arose in a terrible hour
 And smothered her singing in spray.
It changed her to rock and she lies in her
 chamber,
Her faithful stone minstrels all crouched by
 her side,
Above her, weed banners of crimson and
 amber
 Wave slow in the sweep of the tide,
 Glide
 Hither and yon on the tide.
Yet down through the fathoms of twilit
 green water,
Where eerie lights glimmer and strange
 shadows sway,

Maiden's Bower Rocks

The steamer bells ring to the earl's little
daughter
“Ding-dong, ding-a-dong-dey,”
Ring out and sail on and away.

Old Woman's House Rock

(ISLES OF SCILLY.)

"OLD woman, old woman, old woman," said I,
" 'Tis a mighty queer place to be building a
home,
In the teeth of the gales and the wash of the
foam,
With nothing in view but the sea and the
sky ;
It cannot be cheerful, or healthy or dry.
Why don't you go inland and rent a snug
house,
With fowls in the garden and blossoming
boughs,
Old woman, old woman, old woman ? " said I.

" A garden have I at my hand
Beneath the green swell,
With pathways of glimmering sand
And borders of shell.
There twinkle the star-fish and there
Red jellies unfold.

Old Woman's House Rock

The weed banners ripple and flare,
 All purple and gold,
And have I no poultry? Oh come
 When the Equinox lulls,
The air is a-flash and a-hum
 With the tumult of gulls,
They whirl in a shimmering cloud
 Sun-bright on the breeze,
They perch on my chimneys and crowd
 To nest at my knees,
And set their dun chickens to rock on the
 motherly
 Lap of the seas."

"Old woman, old woman, old woman," said I,
"It sounds very well but it cannot be right,
This must be a desolate spot of a night,
With nothing to hear but the guillemot's cry,
The sob of the surf and the wind soighing
 by.
Go inland and get you a cat for your knee,
And gather your gossips for scandal and tea,
Old woman, old woman, old woman," said I.

Old Woman's House Rock

"No amber-eyed tabby may laze
And purr at my feet,
But here in the blue summer days
The seal people meet.
They bask on my ledges and romp
In the swirl of the tides,
Old bulls with their whiskers and pomp
And sleek little brides.
Yet others come visiting me
Than grey seal or bird,
Men come in the night from the sea
And utter no word,
Wet weed clings to bosom and hair,
Their faces are drawn,
They crouch by my embers and stare,
And go with the dawn
To sleep in my garden, the swell flowing
over them
Like a green lawn."

Hard Lewis Rock

(ISLES OF SCILLY.)

I.

IN ages forgotten
The Isles of the West
Were peopled by giants
Colossal of chest,
Tough-fibred as oak-trees
And ten cubits tall,
But Lewis, Hard Lewis,
Was toughest of all.

2.

Each ate a fat bullock,
Each drank up a brook,
Then each would stretch snoring
Until the hills shook.
Then at their diversions
Full stoutly they wrought,
But Lewis, Hard Lewis,
He set them at nought.

Hard Lewis Rock

3.

They raced on the hill-tops,
They swam in the Sound,
They tore up huge boulders
And hurled them around,
They boxed and they wrestled,
But all were despatched
By Lewis, Hard Lewis,
He couldn't be matched.

4.

Then Lewis, Hard Lewis,
Grew puffed over-much,
He challenged the West-wind,
Who slipped from his clutch.
He challenged the Thunder,
The Lightning defied,
Then plunged from Carnweathers
And grappled the tide.

5.

Now all the old giants
Have vanished—save one.

Hard Lewis Rock

Twice daily triumphant,
Twice daily outdone,
In a coil of green waters,
A boil of white suds,
Stands Lewis, Hard Lewis,
Still battling the floods.

George Peters Rock

(ISLES OF SCILLY.)

“WHAT keeps you so late, George Peters ?
Black is the night with tide-rips fuming,
Spindrift flying and breakers booming
Bull-mouthed out on the Zantman Ledges.
Haul your tackle and hoist your kedges,
Set a reef in your jib and run down
East—as the others did at sundown.
The fish are gone and the Sound's a welter
Of foam, so you'd best scud for shelter,
George Peters.”

“It's blowing strong, but I've known it
stronger.
I've waited long, and I may wait longer,
Come time, come tide—but it's neither skate
That I await
Nor conger.”

“Why don't you come in, George Peters ?
Hugh Town kitchens are bright and cosy.

George Peters Rock

Hugh Town windows are twinkling rosy
Over the harbour. Songs and laughter
Echo around the old inn rafter
(Tarpaulin shanties naught could muffle),
Fiddles jiggle and sea-boots shuffle
Horn-pipe measures—while in the Sound
you
Crouch with the breakers moaning round
you,
George Peters."

"It couldn't be counted exactly gay here,
There's nothing but black seas breaking
grey here.
But although the shore lights brightly beckon,
No less I reckon
I'll stay here."

"Does no one wait you, George Peters ?
Is there no girl in all St. Mary's
Quickens your fancy ? Surely there is
Some dark head you have watched in chapel,
Some cheek pink as the flower of apple,
Curved deliciously, dimple-dented,

George Peters Rock

To wake your blood when the lily-scented,
Soft, sea-murmurous dusk is stealing
Spangled with stars and sea-lights wheeling,
George Peters?"

"It' a pale woman I keep tryst with,
She slips quietly out of the mist with
Never a sound but the water drips,
And it's cold, cold lips
I'm kissed with.
"Her foam-white arms go over and round me,
And her green hair binds me as it bound me
On that first night she rose from the deep,
Lulled me to sleep
And drowned me."

Spanish Ledges

(ISLES OF SCILLY.)

THE bells of Cadiz clashed for them
When they sailed away ;
The Citadel guns, saluting, crashed for them
Over the Bay ;
With banners of saints aloft unfolding,
Their poops a glitter of golden moulding,
Tambours throbbing and trumpets neighing,
Into the sunset they went swaying—
But the port they sought they wandered
wide of,
And they won't see Spain again this side of
Judgment Day.

For they're down, deep down in Dead Man's
Town,
Twenty fathoms under the clean green
waters,

Spanish Ledges

No more hauling sheets in the rolling
treasure fleets,
No more stinking rations and mad red
slaughters ;
No galley oars shall bow them, nor shrill
whips cow them,
Frost shall not shrivel them, nor the hot
sun smite,
No more watch to keep, nothing now but
sleep—
Sleep and take it easy in the long twilight.

The bells of Cadiz tolled for them
Mournful and glum ;
Up in the Citadel, requiems rolled for them
On the black drum ;
Priests had many a mass to handle,
Nuestra Señora many a candle,
And many a lass grew old in praying
For a sight of those topsails homewards
swaying—
But it's late to wait till a girl be bride of
A Jack who won't be back this side of
Kingdom Come.

Spanish Ledges

But little they care down there, down there,
Hid from time and tempest by the jade-green
waters ;
They have loves a-plenty down at fathom
twenty,
Pearly-skinned, silver-finned mer-kings'
daughters.
At the gilt quarter-ports sit the Dons at
their sports,
A-dicing and drinking the red wine and
white,
While the crews forget their wrongs in the
sea-maids' songs
And dance upon the foc'sels in the grey
ghost light.

The Sea-Lights

(ISLES OF SCILLY.)

FLASHED Lizard to Bishop

“They’re rounding the fish up

Close under my cliffs where the cormorants
nest,

The lugger lamps glitter

In hundreds and litter

The sea-floor like spangles. What news
from the West?”

Flashed he of the mitre

“The night’s growing brighter,

There’s mist over Annet, but all’s clear at
sea.

Lit up like a city,

Her band playing pretty,

A big liner’s passing. Aye, all’s well with
me.”

Flashed Wolf to Round Island,

“Oh you upon dry land,

The Sea-Lights

With wild rabbits cropping the pinks at
your base,
You lubber, you oughter
Stand watch in salt water,
With tides tearing at you and spray in your
face."

The gun of the Longships
Boomed out like a gong—"Ships
Are bleating around me like sheep gone
astray.
There's fog in my channel
As thick as grey flannel—
Boom—rumble!—I'm busy. Excuse me, I
pray."

They winked at each other,
As brother to brother,
Those red lights and white lights, the
summer night through.
And steered the stray tramps out,
Till dawn snuffed their lamps out,
And stained the sea meadows all purple and
blue.

A Ballad of Roads

A BELL-MARE jangling at the packer's
heels,
Whisking mosquitos with her tattered
tail,
Pack-*burros* grunt; the curling train out-
reels
Through red-wood spurs, up dizzy tracks
that scale
The mountain flanks. Lo! where the snows
prevail
The crowned peaks glitter in the morning
sun,
Like kings caparisoned in silver mail.
Upon these roads are high adventures won.

Birch canoes travelling on rippling keels,
Paddles a-flash in arms that never fail
The long day through. The echoing canyon
peals

A Ballad of Roads

With river songs. Comes evening primrose pale;
The North-Lights weave on night's star-dusted veil
Patterns of fire, flame-pennons finely spun.
Now camps are made and wood-smoke rises frail.
Upon these roads are high adventures won.

'Mid snap of whips, hoarse shouts, sharp axle squeals,
Tented ox-wagons breast the burning gale.
Stout argosies, they roll on groaning wheels,
Seeking new worlds o'er seas of sand and shale.
Ports o' Romance whence queenly clippers sail,
Down the blue ways where foam-maned breakers run,
Sped by great winds that harp through brace and brail
Upon these roads are high adventures won.

A Ballad of Roads

ENVOI.

Prince, in your pleasaunce, when the play
is stale,
The champagne flat, cotillons over-done,
Break for the Open, strike the Outward
Trail,
Upon these roads are high adventures won.

Prairie Song

(ALBERTA.)

THE bluffs were all a-thrill with Spring,
The trees were like slim dancing girls ;
The gay wind set them curtseying,
They laughed and shook their young green
curls.

Beneath the blue and golden day,
League upon rolling league unfurled,
Stretched out and on, away, away,
Over the dim edge of the world,

Stretched out to where, like silver swans
The flocks of cloud went drifting by,
And fleets of shining galleons
Rode down the azure of the sky.

My mare splashed deep in crocuses,
She flung her head and tossed her mane,
Jingled her bit and sniffed the breeze.
I touched her flank and gave her rein.

Prairie Song

And now she flings the miles behind
And hurtles at the miles before,
Crazed by the bugles of the wind,
Trembling and thrilling to the core.

The dark cloud-shadows race beside,
Like flurried drums her hoof strokes beat,
And as a backwards rushing tide
The green trail reels beneath her feet.

She spurns the pools to splintered glass,
Blurred landmarks rise, are past and gone,
And still across the sun-lit grass
I see my shadow hurrying on.

The Homesteader

(NORTH-WEST TERRITORIES.)

If you could come! . . . If in the lonely
night

I might but hear a knock and opening, see
You standing there with hands outstretched
to me—

Do dreams come true? Ah dearest, that
they might!

Time is so long, I hunger for the sight
And touch of you. One magic hour that we
Might hear again the pipes of Arcady
And bridge the years with rainbows of
delight.

Without, the snow might fall and bank and
drift,

We would not care nor heed the gale's
distress,

The Homesteader

When you were gone, and haggard dawn
should lift
To show Love's bower but a cabin rude,
Fresh-hearted I would face the wilderness
And hear Hope singing in the solitude.

The Cow-Pony

(MONTANA.)

"Ki-yi-yi, Boy !
Your flop ears cock at that cry, Boy.
You mean old, lean old son of a gun,
You scrag-maned, mud-stained figger o' fun !
The green-horns snigger an' wink at us,
But they won't be ketchin' a blink at us
When there's bones and bellows to mend ;
For you've a wunnerful way with you,
An' it takes a rocket to stay with you,
When you get in yer stride, old friend."

He was got by an outlawed sire,
He ran by a scrub-mare's side,
He's a bundle o' bone an' wire
Sewn up in a buckskin hide.

He's seethin' with grouch an' hate,
He's sly as a snake is sly.

The Cow-Pony

He's a rough old, tough old skate
With a rollin', red-rimmed eye.

He'd take yer arm at a gulp;
Or hammer you round the ring;
He'd kick his father to pulp,
An' chew his mother to string.

He'll buck—if he's in the mind,
Swop ends till you're spittin' red.
He'll roll—if he feels inclined,
Or stand on his doggone head.

He ain't no picture-card,
With his lazy, limpin' lope,
He's blotched with brands and scarred
With burns from a running rope.

He ain't no hot-house bloom,
No plush-lined ladies' pet,
No waft of shy perfume,
An' yet, kind sirs, an' yet—

The Cow-Pony

He'd tussle a feed, he would,
From an ash-heap, feed him swell.
He'd rustle a drink, he could,
From the sulphur pits o' Hell.

When the steers are bone an' skin,
The range charred black with drought,
When the softer plugs cash in,
He'll somehow limp it out.

When the blizzard's caught you bent,
When yer blinded, lost an' froze,
When yer long, last chance has went,
He'll nose home through the snows.

You should see him brace an' wheel
With a woolly broncho roped.
He's a thing of brains an' steel,
An' shifts like lightnin'—soaped.

You should see him twist an' skim
On the heels of a boltin' calf.
Just toss the reins to him,
An' sit on his back—an' laugh.

The Cow-Pony

When the thunder starts the herd,
An' the scarey long-horns break,
When "Head 'em around" 's the word,
An' you ride for sweet life's sake,

When the night is black an' blind,
When the scrub an' holes is thick,
An' the crazed hooves roar behind,
Then it's him that does the trick.

"Whoo-oo-pee, Boy!
You're a good enough pardner for me, Boy.
Youewe-necked, spur-pecked packet of tricks,
Youscar-pocked, cow-hocked bundle of sticks,
The colts are full of the froth o' youth,
The boys are hot with the wrath o' youth,
But there's many a mile to go.
They'll ramp an' gallop an' yelp, an' then
Lie down an' holler for help, an' then
We'll show 'em a stunt or so!"

The Transport Rider

(OLD ZAMBESI ROAD.)

"M'PURRU" kicks the glowing logs,
And stirs about the blackened pot
Of steaming mealie pap ; the dogs
Creep up lest they should be forgot.

"Five" twangs his fiddle gut and wails
His nightly dirge. With hissing breath,
Old "Klass," the driver, spins his tales
Of lion hunts and sudden death.

The oxen slumber at their rhiems,
Each by his yoke a shadowy blot,
Grunting and wandering in their dreams
Through happy meads where droughts are
not.

The million, million stars are lit,
The sky is pricked with spark and gem ;
They wink down at my fire and it
Respectfully winks back at them.

The Owld Lad

OVER in Donegal
Whin I was young,
I heard the story told
An' the song sung.
I was for wandherin'
Whin I was young.

Now that I'm far away,
Now that I'm old,
Now that my song is sung,
An' my tale told.
Och ! but I'm sick for home
Now that I'm old.

Triplet Serenade

SWEETHEART, the moon
 Her lily face is lifting,
Oh come you soon !
Sweetheart, the moon
Has witched this night of June,
 And Time is drifting, drifting.
Sweetheart, the moon
 Her lily face is lifting.

Triolet

Oh, I'm longing for a kiss
 On her neck so white and slender !
One quick passport into bliss.
Oh, I'm longing for a kiss,
 Surely *one* she couldn't miss,
 I would be divinely tender
Oh, I'm longing for a kiss
 On her neck so white and slender !

Sunward

WHEN upon the window pane, tap the
fingers of the rain—
An ill rain, a chill rain, dripping from the
eaves—
When the farmers haul their logs and the
moor is wisht with fogs,
And the wind sighs like an old man sweep-
ing withered leaves,
When the harvest moon is gone and the
winter creeping on,
The dismal northern winter of snow and
sleet and hail,
Then I smell the salty brine, and I see you
Sweetheart mine,
Bowling through the sunshine, under all
plain sail.

Aye I see you, Lady Love, the Trade clouds
strung above—

Sunward

Bright clouds, white clouds, flocking south
with you—
Like curling lily buds are the flowery sea-
suds
That bloom beneath your forefoot as you
tread the meadows blue.
Oh the wheeling albatross! Oh the diamond
Southern Cross!
Oh the drifts of silver flying fish that skim
beside your rail!
Though my body's in the north, still my
heart goes faring forth,
Bowling through the sunshine, under all
plain sail.

Down Channel

THE chime of country steeples,
The scents of gorse and musk,
The drone of sleepy breakers
Come drifting with the dusk.
A ruddy moon is rising
Like a ripe pomegranate husk.

The coastwise lights are wheeling,
White sword blades in the sky.
The dusky hills grow dimmer,
The last lights blink and die.
Oh, land of home and beauty !
Good-bye, my dear, good-bye !

Magic

MILK-WHITE, milk-white the Queen Moon
rides

With star-maids as befit her.
Under the moon the clipper strides
On a path of faery glitter.

She shears the warm, fire-winking sea,
As the wine-dark rollers flout her.
Ghost-pale, ghost-pale in the moonlight she
With a belt of flame about her.

Callao

SHE's running up for Callao in the blue
Pacific weather,
She's running free for Callao on a clean and
even keel,
With the ripples chuckling round her run
and a dainty little feather
Of foam beneath her figure-head and a
ribbon at her heel.

So Tina, snap your castanets,
Tina, Tina,
And Tina, tune your old guitar and sing
your gayest ditty.
For a clipper's bound for Callao,
Callao,
Callao,
With a reefer boy that loves you so,
Tina, my pretty.

Callao

She's rippling on for Callao, to a croon of
 sapphire water,
She's bowling on for Callao with kites and
 stun-sails spread,
With a wail of sea-birds in her trucks and a
 porpoise to escort her,
The Cordillera's snows ashine like pearly
 clouds ahead.

So, Tina, pick your reddest rose,
 Tina, Tina,
And, Tina, wear your brightest shawl to
 catch a sailor's money.
For a clipper's bound for Callao,
 Callao,
 Callao,
With a reefer boy who loves you so,
 Tina, my honey.

At Anchor

THE warm, flower-scented breezes blow
Off shore, and on them comes the slow
Throbbing of drums, of dancing feet,
And Island singing, dreamy sweet.
Seaward the fisher torches glow.

Her anchor-flukes in coral bite,
In coral gardens lily white.
Her tracery of stays and spars
Looms like a black net filled with stars
Raked from the blue and glimmering night.

Against the reefs' encircling fold
The breakers shatter, and are rolled
Shorewards—smooth, fire-shot hills of glass.
She dips to meet them. As they pass
Lifts—with her forefoot dribbling gold.

Alchemy

IN 'seventy-nine her keel was laid,
She did ten years in the coastal trade,
But since those days she's been a rover,
Tramping the seven seas all over,
Tramping them back and fore and sideways
But mostly on uncharted tideways
That honest traders had no word of,
And gun-boat skippers never heard of.
She's wandered where the ice-pack reaches,
Seal-poaching on the Behring beaches ;
Up sluggish, soupy jungle rivers,
Where lurk proas, devils and the shivers,
Swopping condemned, corroded rifles
For pearls, spice, gold-dust—and such trifles.
Off flowery, fairy isles she's hovered
Trading (her customers all covered
By maxims ranged along her gunnel),
Rigged false masts and a dummy funnel,
Flown the White Cross of Island missioners,

Alchemy

Then haled her coppery parishioners
(Despite their frantic supplications)
To bondage on remote plantations.
With bland and glacial effront'ry
She's flown the flag of every country,
And changed her name to suit her kidney.
She's been the "Walleroo," of Sydney ;
The "Oscar Ohlsen," of Karlskrona ;
The "Santa Fé," of Barcelona ;
The "Kelpie," Leith ; "Il Ré," Catania ;
The "Konig Haakon," Christiania ;
To give a typical selection.
With paint she's altered her complexion,
And practised manifold disguises,
Pursuing shady enterprises
All up and down the world's dim edges.
Whilst noble ships have split on ledges,
Or drowned on nights of flame and thunder,
And eager clippers sailed clean under,
Still she limps on, battered and rusty,
Her engines lame, her bottom crusty,
Her deck house starred with bullet splashes,
Her fo'c'sle scarred with shrapnel gashes.

Alchemy

Loud with her engines' crazy clamour
Into the splendid sunset glamour,
Leaky and foul, accursed and haunted,
She reels and staggers, nothing daunted,
The oily, flame-gilt waters churning,
Her rusty hide all glowing, burning,
With her every stay a gleaming wire,
And her every port-hole flashing fire,
Sun-blazoned into the west goes she,
A golden ship on a golden sea.

Ports

SOME Vancouver's praises sing,
Where the silver ranges shine,
And the off-shore breezes bring
Scents of tamarack and pine.

Some for Cape Town sigh aloud,
Drowsing on the Mountain's knees,
Table Mountain, wreathed in cloud
Brooding o'er the southern seas.

Some of Hong Kong harbour dream,
Where are junks with painted eyes,
And the sampan lanterns gleam
Like a swarm of fiery flies.

Kronstad looming gaunt and grim ;
Rio, Rio flashing fair ;
Papeete, where brown girls swim
With hibiscus in their hair.

Ports

Golden Gate or Golden Horn,
Lumber ports or ports of spice,
Ports of sunset, ports of morn,
Blue with summer, grey with ice

All are havens of delight
To poor sailors in from sea.
Ah ! but at the fall of night
London River calls to me.

When my years of youth are run,
Blown to lee like flying foam,
Let me see at set of sun
London and the Port of Home.

New Draft

(PLEOGSTREET, April, 1915.)

THE mausers snapped,
Machine-guns rapped,
The field-guns flashed and battered like
some crazy tropic storm.
And they hailed, "What cheer, Recruity!
Have you come to do your duty?
Did your sweetheart kiss you on the mouth
and your mother wrap you warm?"

The rockets flared,
A searchlight stared,
And showed the dead men hanging limp
across the rusty wire.
It winked. "They're getting fruity,
So I think me bold Recruity,
You'd best not look on them too long on
your first night under fire."

New Draft

The star-shells drooped,
The Five-nines whooped,
And roared, " Well now you've got here and
 the songs and cheers are done,
Set your teeth, dear young Recruitry,
And forget your home and beauty,
For there's nothing now but you and us,
 stark Life and Death, my son."

To a Regiment of Horse

"Regi Adsumus Coloni."

(B.E.F., FRANCE.)

THE timber-wolves have bayed our fires
Among the dark Alaskan pine.
Our mule-bells rang in jangling choirs
Along the Andes' naked spine.
Our rifles broke Bambarta's spears
And rolled the waves of impis back.
Alberta saw us roping steers,
And Queensland heard our stock-whips
crack.
Oh sturdily we used to plough,
Where Aorangi's cloud-packs cling,
Levuka knew our keels—but now
The Colonies stand to the King.

Our dog-teams breast the Dawson trail,
But other voices whoop them on.

To a Regiment of Horse

By Lotus isles our schooners sail,
With stranger hands their helms upon.
Our fields are waste, our fences rot,
The wild-pig tramples through our cane,
The Southern Cross shall find us not,
The North Lights look for us in vain.
For we, we saw the Flag unfurled,
And heard immortal trumpets ring,
Like God's own summons round the world,
And we obeyed them, glorying.

And now the trapper rides beside
The palm-oil trader. Knee to knee,
The stockman and the planter ride
The crimson road to victory—
Oh little land of hearts' desire,
The earth is broad and fair to roam,
What offer you but blood and fire ?
Yet love has led our footsteps home.
Ave ! High-held our sabres flame.
Write this above us where we lie,
" Back from the wide world's ends they
came
And died, and were content to die."

Chemin des Dames

(FRANCE, July, 1917.)

In silks and satins the ladies went
Where the breezes sighed and the poplars
bent,
Taking the air of a Sunday morn
Midst the red of poppies and gold of corn,
Flowery ladies in gold brocades,
With negro pages and serving maids,
In scarlet coach, or in gilt sedan,
With brooch and buckle and flounce and fan,
Patch and powder and trailing scent.
Under the trees the ladies went,
Lovely ladies that gleamed and glowed,
As they took the air on the Ladies' Road.

Boom of thunder and lightning flash
The torn earth rocks to the barrage crash :
The bullets whine and the bullets sing
From the mad machine-guns chattering ;

Chemin des Dames

Black smoke rolling across the mud,
Trenches plastered with flesh and blood.
The blue ranks lock with the ranks of grey,
Stab, and stagger, and sob, and sway ;
The living cringe from the shrapnel bursts,
The dying moan of their burning thirsts,
Moan and die in the gulping slough—
Oh, where are the butterfly ladies now ?

Old Soldiers

(B.E.F., Nov., 1918.)

THEY dug us down and earthed us in, their
hasty shovels plying,
Us, the poor dead of Oudenarde, Ramillies,
Waterloo,
We heard their drum-taps fading and their
trumpet fanfares dying,
As they marched away and left us in the
dark and silence lying,
Home-bound for happy England and the
green fields that we knew.

We slept. The seasons went their round.
We did not hear the rover
Winds in our coverlets of grass, the plough-
shares tear the mould,
We did not feel the bridal earth thrill to her
April lover,

Old Soldiers

Nor hear the song of bees among the
poppies and the clover,
Shadow or sun to us were one and time
went by untold.

We woke. The soil about us shook to the
long roll of thunder—
War loose and making music on his crashing
brazen gongs—
The sharp hoof-beat, the thresh of feet
stirred our old bones down under ;
Wheels upon wheels ground overhead ; then
with a throb of wonder,
We heard the chant of Englishmen chanting
their marching songs.

Blood of our blood ! We heard them swing
adown the teeming highways,
As we swung once. We heard them shout ;
we heard the jests they cast,
And we dead men remembered them ; blue
Junes in Devon byways,
Women bereft, we loved and left, women
with sweet and shy ways.

Old Soldiers

These were their race ! We strove to rise,
but the strong clay held us fast.

Year in, year out, along the roads the cease-
less wagons clattered ;

Listened we for an English voice ever, ever
in vain ;

Far in the west year out, year in, terrible
thunders battered,

Drumming the doom of whom ? of whom ?—
Hope in our hearts lay shattered. . . .

Then we heard the lilt of Highland pipes
and English songs again.

On, ever on, we heard them press ; their
jaunty bugles blended

Proudly and clear that we might hear, we
dead men of old wars,

How the red agony was passed and the long
vigil ended.

Now may we sleep in peace again, lapped in
a vision splendid

Of England's banners marching onwards,
upwards to the stars.

The Hairies

(FRANCE, Feb., 1919.)

WE'VE carried Guards, Lancers, Hussars
and Dragoons,
We've tugged in the batteries, columns and
trains,
On *pavé* that smoked under white summer
noons,
And tracks that washed out under black
winter rains.

We've shivered in standings hock-deep in
the mud,
With matted tails turned to the drift of the
sleet,
We've seen the bombs flash and been
spattered with blood
Of mates as they rolled, belly-ripped, at our
feet.

The Hairies

We've dragged ammunition up shell-smitten
tracks,
Round bottomless craters, through stump-
littered woods,
When the wagons gave out, took the load
on our backs,
And, somehow or other, delivered the goods.

But the dread roads, the red roads will see
us no more,
It's England, chum, England for you and for
me.
The country-folk wave us as westwards we
pour
Down the jolly white highways that lead to
the sea.

So warp out your transports and bear us away
From the Yser and Somme, from the Ancre
and the Aisne,
From fire-blackened deserts of shell-pitted
clay,
And show us our Cotswolds and Chilterns
again.

The Hairies

Aye, show us Old England all silver and gold,
With the flame o' the gorse and the flower
o' the thorn,
We long for lush meadowlands where we
were foaled,
And boast of great runs with the Belvoir
and Quorn.

The Brigadier's long-tailed Arabians glow
At thoughts of a chukka with Hurlingham's
cracks,
The Colonel's mare, woman-like, pines for
the Row,
To amble again with the fashionable hacks.

The pack-pony dreams of a primrosy combe,
A leisurely life in a governess cart,
Plum-cake and a bottle-nosed gardener-
groom.

The Clyde has a Wensleydale farm in his
heart.

We're plunging and whinnying, silly with
bliss,

The Hairies

Forgetting leg-weariness, terror and scars.
Ye fair maids of England, Oh blow a soft
kiss
To the hairy old horses come home from
the wars.

A Ballade of Battles

WE read of old, heroic deeds,
Clanging through Homer's wonder-lay,
Of how bronze-harnessed warrior breeds
Drave black ships through Aegean spray,
And warred until their beards were gray,
Because, forsooth, a princeling's glance
Was bright and led a queen astray.
Then was the flood-tide of Romance.

Oh, for the rain-swept Crecy meads,
When Edward's goose-quills bit their way
Among King Philip's knights and steeds,
Humbling their arrogant array.
That was the game for men to play,
To take a prize or snap a lance,
To sack a town or bite the clay :
Then was the flood-tide of Romance.

A Ballade of Battles

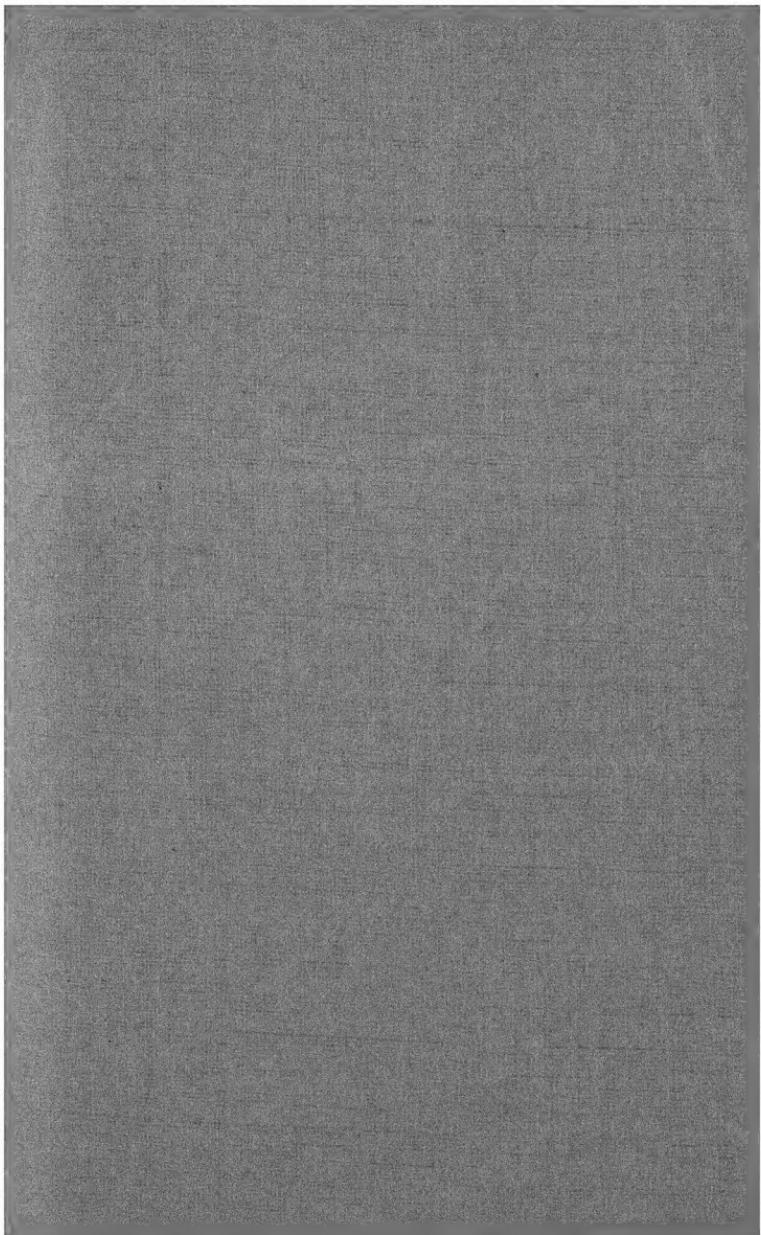
The rapt imagination feeds
On Rupert spurring plumed and gay,
'Gainst iron horsemen chanting creeds,
While deep drums roll and trumpets bray.
The thund'ring squadrons crash and sway;
Sword rings on sword, a radiance
Of white steel whirls above the fray.
Then was the flood-tide of Romance.

ENVOI.

Prince of some peace-lapped latter day,
Reading of our locked lines in France,
Methinks you, in your turn, shall say—
“ *Then was the flood-tide of Romance.*”

THE END.

109



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